Factors Militating Against Effective Vocational Guidance Programme in Nigerian Secondary Schools

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Abstract:
The importance of guidance and counselling in secondary schools and higher education institutions cannot be over emphasized. Many students now suffer from lack of information about so many things that concern them; ranging from career development, personal understanding to information about the subjects they do in schools. Therefore, this paper presents the factors militating against the effective vocational guidance programme in Nigerian Secondary Schools. It discussed the concepts of vocational guidance and its impacts on secondary school students, factors militating against effective vocational guidance programme were discussed and way forward were suggested.

Keywords: Vocational Guidance, Vocational Education, Secondary Schools, Guidance

1. Introduction

In many post-primary schools in Nigeria, it has been observed that the students often lack supports of professionals meant to provide them with basic vocational guidance they need to make career choices. Most of these students in their early stages of post-primary classes are left at cross roads on whether to choose science related subjects or arts related subjects; a decision which may eventually determine their career choices. Many a times, these students simply make choices of careers due to peer pressure groups influence, parental influence, societal influences etc.; which in turn leave them in helpless state of affairs after graduation. This is where vocational guidance plays its leading roles in providing students opportunities to understand themselves, the right form of careers to take and why they should take up certain subjects for such careers.

If a student wants to be an engineer just because his/her peers influence for instance, and s/he therefore studied sciences in senior secondary class when he/she is good in Art related subjects. If such student eventually graduate passing all the science subjects that would qualify him/her to enrol in the University to study Engineering; one will later discover that such student may not be able to cope with fellow students in engineering school because, he/she did not know while in post-primary school, what an engineer's roles in the society is. S/he doesn't know that he will get to do a lot of mathematics and calculations on roads, buildings and bridges construction. Also, if such student manages to pass all courses in the University and graduates; such graduate will definitely not be fit in the world of engineering works because; he lacked the skills needed for him to compete in the world of civil engineering. Many a times, schools staff assigned to take care of Vocational Guidance Programmes often lack instructional materials to aid students (Okonkwo, 2011). This is why this paper was designed to present those factors that militate against effective vocational guidance programme in secondary schools.

2. Vocational Guidance

Psychologists, especially those in the field of vocational guidance and counselling are of the view that each individual has sure abilities, interests, and personality traits band other characteristics. It is the conviction of these professionals that of these characteristics are known together with their latent values and where on the job-market these values can be put into appropriate uses, the individual is more likely to become a happier person, a more effective worker and a more useful citizen. Ipaya (2004) asserted that knowledge of oneself and knowledge of the opportunities existing in one's environment and, in particular, knowledge of what one can do that employers would be willing to pay for can help an individual make a good vocational adjustment. Also, self-knowledge and occupational knowledge are very important means of ensuring accurate and adequate occupational choice. There are psychological processes necessary to bring about these self and social understating which are so vital for good vocational adjustment. These psychological processes are those of vocational guidance.

Vocational guidance, according to Parsons (1909) is the processes of helping a person match his personal attributes and his background with suitable jobs and employment opportunities. Super and Crites (1949) expanded the above definition by saying that

vocational guidance is the process of helping the individual to, ascertain, accept, understand and apply the relevant facts about the occupational world is ascertained through incidental and planned explanatory activities. Super (1957) defines the enterprise of vocational guidance as the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated picture of himself, and his role in the world of work, to test this concept against reality and to convert it into reality with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society. A definition of this kind, unlike that of Parsons' conceives vocational guidance as a task that should begin with a teaching function explicitly designed to locate for the individual the type of person he is; with a view to ushering in for the client, that required level of self knowledge he needs to be able to come to a decision about what to do in life. In line with the above explanation, Nwoye (1990) asserts that through vocational guidance students are given systemic attention in understanding the meaning of work in human life; including survival trends in the career world; vocations that are available; and those vital factors and forces one has to consider or way, to make an informed career choice.

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3. The Challenges

It may look like a novel idea to suggest the use of information communication technology for vocational guidance in Nigeria, because of the slow pace of technological awareness and economic development yet, we must continue to move forward technologically, and cannot pretend to be unaware that information communication technology is the processor of modern society. If school children are initiated and nurtured in the knowledge and skills provided with information technology, there may be an assurance that the quality of vocational guidance services will improve in terms of relevance to the needs of present dynamic society worldwide, and system anywhere in developed and developing countries. According to Jonnwokolo (2001) it will take an average school certificate owner in Nigeria about four weeks to be trained to be a very good information communication technology, website design, and a little longer to be a certified internet programmer if he/she is a neophyte and not a novice.

Education Planners fashioned policies expecting to meet the needs and challenges of changing times, particularly in science and technology, they recommended explicitly that teaching beginning at primary and secondary schools should be practical and exploratory. But they laid little emphasis on the ability of the students to understand themselves, and be able to make career choices. According to Laurie, (2000), in order for the youths to be info-empowered, there has to be greater access unobstructed free flow of information. Public internet access, especially in schools (primary to tertiary levels) is an important public good deserving political and financial support, if not the status of a Universal service.

Many schools lack students in majority of the higher institutions in Nigeria lack quality teaching of the above course of study and this results to poor performance of the graduates in the industries or employment markets (Okolie and Nwuzo, 2013). In general, the quality of technical and vocational education trainings in most institutions offering this course of study is very low, with due emphasis on theory and certification rather than on skills acquisition and proficiency testing (Okolie and Nwuzo, 2013). Inadequate qualified Instructors, obsolete equipment and machinery, lack of instructional materials and information communication technology facilities are some of the factors that combine to reduce the effectiveness of training in meeting the required knowledge and skills objectives Miller (2005). High quality skills training requires appropriate workshop equipment, adequate supply of training materials, and practice by learners. New and effective teaching strategies should be adopted by the class teachers using instructional materials to enhance the learning of vocational skills which is saleable in the employment market, help the graduate gain employment, create jobs and have sustainable livelihood. Most instructors do not have the skills to teach, or impact the learner with technical and vocation education knowledge and skills (Okolie and Nwuzo, 2013).

3.1. Inadequate Facilities and Counselling Resources

For Nigerian system of education to graduate entrepreneurs capable of contributing towards economic growth and development, there is high need for supply of materials for vocational teacher counsellors. The inadequacy in guidance and counselling materials has contributed to the diminution of the quality of graduates in Nigeria.

3.2. Inconsistent Government Policy on Technical and Vocational Education
Inconsistency in the formulation and implementation of vocational guidance policies has been a major setback to the advancement of vocational guidance programmes in post-primary schools in Nigeria.

3.3. Lack of Vocational Teacher Training
The training of school staff is ordinarily a continuous exercise to ensure consistent improvement in the quality of their outputs. The training is in two-fold: training to acquire minimum qualification to teach and continued professional training. Both types of training can be acquired either locally or overseas. According to Ekemede, (2000) usually, local training within the nation is cheaper than overseas training but more strenuous because of inadequate facilities, literature and distractions arising from the need to meet the necessary demands. Overseas training requires a lot of foreign exchange but the enabling environment exists to achieve success in a record time.

3.4. Poor Funding of Technical and Vocational Education
The success and developmental advancement in technical and vocational education which have been actualized over the years has been frustrated to failure as a result of poor funding.

3.5. Low Level of Technical and Industrial Development
The primary concern of entrepreneurship training is to prepare people for occupations in business and industry. However, in a country where business and industrial activities are at low rate, most products of entrepreneurship end up in occupations for less than they bargained for. They take up jobs as artisans, accept low paying jobs or occupy jobs that are un-related to what they are trained for. As a result of the low level of business and industrial activities, entrepreneurship training cannot prepare everyone for jobs and expect them to be employed even though they surely will be employable. This situation is challenging in the sense that it must accept the added responsibility of producing individuals who would prove to be the tonic needed for business and industrial development. When this is done, there will be a high demand for entrepreneurs to work so as to improve the economy. The primary concern of entrepreneurship programme is to prepare people for occupations in business and industry or to be self-employed after acquiring skills in a particular trade. However, a country where business and industrial activities are low, most graduates end up in occupations for less than they bargained for. They either take up jobs that are not related to their field of works or roam the streets in search of white-collar jobs. The industry relation is highly needed so that the students will be able to visit the industries for their required and necessary practical under the guidance of the teacher.

3.6. The Neglect of Technical and Vocational Education
The neglect of technical and vocational education is socially and economically injurious because it is robbing the nation the contributions the graduates would make on poverty alleviation.

3.7. Poor Learning Conditions
According to Inyiagu (2005), the conditions under which knowledge is imparted in most Nigerian institutions are experiencing poverty of training equipment, shortage of staff, inadequate funding, inability to provide variety of training programmes and equipment such that recipients turn out to both national development and entrepreneurs capable of reshaping the economic system in Nigeria.

3.8. Lack of Modern Equipment
Most institutions according to Ekpeyong, (2005), lack modern equipment relevant to societal needs. And the equipment should be supplied for effective training to take place. Most schools use obsolete materials while some do not have equipments at all. The students now depend only on the theoretical aspects of the entrepreneurship training programme. Lack of practical works by the students due to lack of modern equipment will only leave the students in a state of confusion whenever they find themselves in any field of work after graduation.

3.9. Enrolment Upsurge
The continuing enrolment into institution of higher learning should have been a plus to national development, but the demand is at variance with the physical capacity to accommodate them thereby creating problem of management.

3.10. Lack of Funding
Sometimes, the governments do not give proper attention to the institutions as required. Funds are given or provided latterly or sometimes not provided at all. This brings down the financial aspects of running the entrepreneurship training programmes.

3.11. Poor State of Laboratories, Workshops and Other Infrastructure
Most of the technical and vocational institutions in Nigeria are stocked with obsolete equipment that has outlived their relevance in modern times due to technological advancement.

3.12. Policy Makers Are Non-Entrepreneurship Trained Persons
Many administrators of entrepreneurship development training programmes at policy levels are non-entrepreneurship trained persons. And they do not seem to understand the whole issues in entrepreneurship training programmes when it comes to distribution of funds, practical works, and students' involvement with the industries for proper skills acquisition. As a result, entrepreneurship training is poorly funded in our institutions of higher learning. Hassan (2005), noted that in spite of all the programmes floated by various government of the country, the economy is still in shambles.

4. Roles Of Instructional Materials And Informational Communication Technology
Instructional materials and informational communication technology helps to improve communication between the teacher and the learner and it also appeal to the senses of the learner.

- Instructional materials and informational communication technology communicate the skills, principles, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, aptitudes and concepts to the learners effectively thereby reducing the teacher's verbal communication. They provide information that adds meaning to a matter under study.

The delivery of quality technical and vocation education training is dependent on the competence of the teacher; competence measured in terms of theoretical knowledge, use of information communication technology, technical and pedagogical skills as well as being abreast with new technologies in the workforce. Nwobasi (2005) opined that competency based training can also enhance quality of learner's performances after graduation. When once the quality of teaching of Technical and Vocational Education improves in Nigeria, the vocational skills learnt will lead to the production of skilled personnel who will be self-reliant and enterprising; this caliber of manpower is also required for the development of any nation (Nwagwu, 2003).

- When the learners see, hear and touch what the teacher is saying or teaching, they will be motivated to learn more; instructional materials make teaching and learning learner-centered. It gives the learners opportunity to actively participate in the lessons and also create knowledge. Appropriate application of information communication technology and instructional materials is capable of individualizing, humanizing, personalizinge and optimizing teaching and learning.
- Computer-assisted instruction provides individualized self paced instruction. Computer also gives immediate feedback during teaching and learning process and all these motivate the learner.
- The instructional materials and information communication technology make the teacher's job easier,faster and more effective. When a teacher sees that he/she has relevant materials to teach her subject, she becomes more eager to go and teach. Also, the listeners perform well academically as a result of interaction with instructional materials and information communication technology, they naturally become happier (Eya, 2006). They help the teachers provide students with meaningful sorces of information. They help the teacher overcome physical differences in presenting subject matter.
- Using information communication technology and instructional materials during teaching and learning relieves boredomd and add interest. It rekindles the learner's concentration especially the audio visual materials.

5. Role of the Government
The government has to start rapid information communication technology development, which will later translate into significant financial returns for our nation. The poor information communication technology development in our continent Africa could be insensitivity on parts of both government and youths (students). Our students nowadays are sadly characterized by a rapidly diminishing mental and intellectual capacity and increased dependence on physical affections, violence, lust and cheap discarded pleasures of the western world. It is a unique affair among the youths involving in cultism, armed robbery, prostitution, mass failure in examination, examination malpractice and other social vices (Odusanya, Dawodu and Oluw 2005). It should be noted that the information communication technology requires massive funds injection, it will drastically empower the youths towards better citizens. Importantly it is discovered that 70% of our universities, colleges and polytechnic graduates do not know how to use computer.
There are a lot of opportunities abound in this area. However, there is need to build a mass pool of information technology adopting the much needs or approaches for the actualization of the objectives and pursuance of the vision in practical terms for any meaningful empowerment to come the way of African youths in information communication technology, the youths must have prominent roles to play in the information technology affairs and policy formulation. According to Dawodu (2002), the government must equally demonstrate total commitment to the vision statement of the information technology policy and work assiduously towards the attainment of its objectives so that Africa can move from developing continent to that of developed continent.

6. Conclusion
From the foregoing, one can agree that instructional materials and information communication technology are highly needed for effective teaching and learning in schools. It enhances and sustains quality education be it general education or technical/ vocational education programmes. To develop knowledge and ability on the use of information communication technology like computers and further on internet to an appreciable level starting at 'grass root' is an investment on human development now and for the future. Since information communication technology is the processor of modern society and internet is the centre of its operation, instruction to any one desiring to know and manipulate the system should start with computers. Knowledge of information communication technology and instructional materials therefore means knowledge first on how to use computer hardware as well as software packages and other

teaching aids. Quality of technical and vocational education can be improved in Nigeria with the introduction of information communication technology and instructional materials.

7. Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;
- Technical and Vocational Education Teachers must be competent to give good teaching methods to their students using instructional materials to enable them develop positive attitudes towards learning.
- Government should encourage students' participation in field trips and excursion. The students should be encouraged to visit manufacturing industries, Technical Institutions of higher learning, Trade fairs, Artisan's workshops in order to observe natural environments and dully supervised under the control of the technical/vocation teacher. Visit to these places may challenge the students to become more creative and develop interests in Technical and Vocational Programmes.
- The Nigerian students should be directed towards focusing more on intellectual development. Information communication technology and instructional material should always be used during teaching and learning programmes to enhance learning.

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